SBSC Weekly Highlights, Aug. 13-19, 2006

Endangered Humpback Chub Population is Stabilizing: Recently collected data for endangered humpback chub (Gila cypha) in Grand Canyon suggest that the population of adult fish (age 4+) may be stabilizing after more than a decade of decline, according to biologists with the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Southwest Biological Science Center. Between 2001 and 2005, the number of adult fish appears to have stabilized at an estimated 5,000 fish. In 2005, scientists also detected more juvenile fish (age 1 to 4) and young-of-year fish, or fish hatched in 2005, than previous years. Primary factors thought to be contributing to population stabilization are a non-native rainbow trout mechanical removal experiment, drought-induced warming from lower water levels upstream at Lake Powell and substantial warming induced by the 2000 low steady summer flow experiment held at Glen Canyon Dam. Contact: Matthew Andersen, mandersen@usgs.gov, 928-607-4847

USGS Participates in Drought Impact Meeting at Northern Arizona University: On August 14, 15, and 16, USGS employee/volunteer, Kirsten Ironside, gave a presentation at Northern Arizona University on a new research project entitled: *Regional Dynamic Vegetation Model for the Colorado Plateau: A species-specific approach*. Co-authors include Ken Cole, Neil Cobb, Gregg Garfin, Ben Crawford, Phil Duffy, Jon Eischeid, John Shaw, Jimmie Chew, Henry Diaz, and Deanna Pennington. The meeting focused on current and future impacts of prolonged drought in the southwest, featured presentations regarding ongoing research from scientists all over the southwest with time given for discussions of future collaborations. For more information, contact Ken Cole, Kirsten Ironside, or Neil Cobb. (Ken Cole, (928) 556-7466 ext-230, Kristen Ironside, Kirsten.Ironside@nau.edu)

USGS Scientists Contacted by Palm Springs Desert Sun Newspaper: Kenneth Cole was contacted by Ben Spillman of the Palm Springs Desert Sun regarding climate change impacts on Joshua Trees, specifically those in Joshua Tree National Park. Cole discussed ongoing USGS research and provided reprints of prior USGS publications on the subject. Contact: Ken Cole, 928-556-7466

Call for Symposia and Organized Oral Sessions: USGS Researcher Bill Halvorson serves on the program committee for the joint meeting of the Ecological Society of America and the Society for Ecological Restoration. The meeting, Ecological Restoration in a Changing World is scheduled for San Jose, California in August of 2007. The program committee has a call out for session organizers for this meeting. The deadline for submitting a proposal for a session is September 15. If you are interested go to either the ser.org or esa.org websites, or contact Bill. Bill Halvorson, SBSC 520-621-1174: bill_halvorson@usgs.gov

Fifth European Conference on Ecological Restoration, Greifswald, Germany: USGS

Researcher Bill Halvorson will be participating in this conference, August 20-25, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for Ecological Restoration. Bill will be speaking on the role of ecological restoration in natural protected areas and participating in another session on the importance of ecological restoration in a world with increasingly rapid natural area degradation. This latter topic will also be included in the Board of Directors' deliberations about the role of the Society in today's rapidly changing world. Bill Halvorson, SBSC 520-621-1174: bill_halvorson@usgs.gov

More Invasive Plants Mapped in the Southwest: An update of the Southwest Exotic Plant Mapping Program (SWEMP) regional database is now available at the Southwest Exotic Plant Clearinghouse (SWEPIC) website (http://www.usgs.nau.edu/SWEPIC/). The SWEMP2006 database contains over 31,600 records of invasive non-native plant occurrence that were contributed by weed managers in the Southwest. Over 148 invasive, non-native plants are represented. The database can be downloaded, queried with the web query tool, or viewed on an interactive map. For more information: Kathryn_A_Thomas@usgs.gov, 520.670.5534.